

St. James' E-pistle

June 2, 2017

Pulpit Notes

*"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability."
Acts 2:4*

This Sunday, wear **RED**! It is, of course for the high holy feast of Pentecost.

Now, you probably know what Pentecost is, but in case you don't, it is the birth of the church. It is the day when the apostles received the gift of the Holy Spirit. And it is a day most people outside the church know nothing about.

One of the things I like about Pentecost is that it has no secular equivalent - and the secular world has not co-opted it in any way. You won't find Pentecost sales at Macy's. You won't buy Pentecost Candy at Stop & Shop. There are no Pentecost specials on TV and - praise God! - there are no Pentecost carols on the radio.

In short, capitalism has not found a way to profit from Pentecost, so it leaves this most important holy day to the church.

But for us ... it is a big deal.

Without Pentecost, we would probably not be here at all, at least not as the Christian Church. Without Pentecost, the earliest believers would probably have lost their motivation and, especially in the face of persecution, simply given up in time.

Pentecost is the commemoration of the promise Jesus made - that the believers would receive power to do miraculous things such as preaching the Gospel in the face of disdain and violence. It is the day when the apostles understood that their mission was not merely to the children of Israel but to all people everywhere.

The Holy Spirit came to them on that day and gave them guidance on what they were to do - spread the Gospel, heal the sick, open God's love to all - but also gave them courage and strength to persevere.

When I was a child, we celebrated Pentecost by releasing red helium balloons with messages of hope and peace from the scriptures attached. The attached cards had return addresses, so people who found them used to contact to let us know how far the balloons went. They went pretty far! Of course, we don't do that anymore because the balloons present a hazard to animals, but that only means we need to devise other ways to reach out to the world - all the world.

So wear red this Sunday - and think about how YOU can reach the world with the Good News.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

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Did You Know?

The Episcopal Church is a church of seasons, and we're getting ready for a new one!

In just over a week, we will leave behind the season of Easter - Yes, it's still Easter! Alleluia! - and we will enter the season of Pentecost.

Each season of the year has its own meaning and its own color. The first season is Advent (purple or blue), a season of preparation for Christ's coming. Then Christmas (white), then Epiphany (green). After that is Lent (purple), a penitential season preparing for the crucifixion. The short season of Holy Week is Red. Then Easter is white.

The News of the Church

Pentecost

Sunday, June 4 is the Feast of Pentecost. That's the day when the Holy Spirit, looking like fire, descended upon the apostles. They were empowered to speak in different languages, bringing the Gospel to the whole world. It's a tradition to wear red on Pentecost - so wear red!

Reformation Invitation

The Christian Church in the Western Hemisphere is observing 500 years since the start of the Reformation. In the spirit of ecumenical fellowship, St. Kateri Tekakwitha Roman Catholic Church is holding an ecumenical worship to observe this dramatic change in the western church.

The service is on Pentecost Sunday, June 4 at 3 PM. The address is 1925 Route 82 in LaGrangeville. Hope you can make it!

Graveyard Tour Meeting

The Graveyard Tour Committee will meet on Tuesday, June 6 at 7:00 PM in the Chapel.

Women's Dinner

Mark your calendars for the next Women's Group meeting, which is Monday, June 13 at 6:00 PM.

Men's Breakfast

Mark your calendars for the next Men's Breakfast is Saturday, June 17 at 8:00 AM. As usual, we will meet at Cranberry's.

Call to Fight Human Trafficking

The Episcopal Public Policy Network is asking all Episcopalians to join the fight against modern-day slavery today by asking your state representatives in the Senate and Assembly to support groundbreaking and crucial legislation on human trafficking. The New York Senate and Assembly have introduced legislation (S.5955/A.06834) to lessen the prevalence of human trafficking in hotels and put systems in place to identify and protect victims.

This legislation would require hotels to train their employees to identify potential trafficking situations and report suspected cases. It would also bring awareness to the public and possible victims by requiring hotels to post a notice in the lobby about what human trafficking is and how to obtain help by calling the National Human Trafficking Hotline (888-373-7888).

According to data collected through the National Human Trafficking Hotline, New York is one of the 5 top states for human trafficking. New Yorkers most likely to encounter a victim include employees of hotels, which are primary venues for sex trafficking of adults and children. Act now to help our state fight human trafficking!

Tell your state representatives to vote YES on S 5955/A 06834!



ROOTS & BRANCHES
PROGRAMS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

presents

Agents of Peace in a Time of Fear

A Retreat

June 9th and 10th, 2017



Discover Your Inner Peacemaker & Reconciler

on this retreat designed to turn back our present tide of divisiveness, conflict and inflammatory speech. Participants will reconnect with the peacemaking example of Christ and be empowered with practical methods to become agents of peace and reconciliation in their own communities.

Co-led by the Revs. Masud Ibn Syedullah and Garrett Mettler at Taconic Retreat Center in Milan, NY.

Accommodations at the retreat center and all meals are included in the \$300 registration cost. To find out more and to register call 845-758-8764.

June 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 PENTECOST	5 Office Closed	6 7 PM Graveyard Tour Meeting	7 10 AM Morning Prayer 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	8 11 AM Bible Study	9	10
11	12 Office Closed 6PM Women's Group	13	14 10 AM Morning 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	15 11 AM Bible Study	16	17 8 AM Men's Breakfast
18 Fathers Day	19 Office Closed	20 7 PM Vestry	21 10 AM Morning	22 11 AM Bible Study	23	24
25 Recognition Sunday	26 Office Closed	27	28 10 AM Morning	29 11 AM Bible Study	30	

Sundays:

Holy Eucharist Rite I is at 8:00 AM

Holy Eucharist Rite II (with music) is at 10:00 AM. Sunday School and nursery are available at 10:00 AM.

The News of the Diocese

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: Please pray for these diocesan ministries this week. If you want to check out the entire year's calendar for intercession, it's simple to find - go to <http://www.diocesen.org> and click under "Beliefs and Practices."

- 4 Day of Pentecost Trinity Wall Street
- 5 St. James' Church, North Salem
- 6 Church of the Ascension, Manhattan
- 7 Community of the Holy Spirit
- 8 Church of the Intercession, Manhattan
- 9 Church of the Holy Apostles, Manhattan
- 10 Church of St. Barnabas, Irvington

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Susie Buhalis, Mariel Carter, Dee, Linkin Ewalt, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Cath Holywell (priest in the Church of England and Indaba partner who worshiped with St. James' - undergoing heart surgery), Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Charles Pardee, Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (serving in Afghanistan), John Ross, Richard Secor, Sharon Secor (recovering from heart surgery), James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Patricia, (sister of Barbara Slegel), Carl Smith, Marguerite Spratt, Janice Syedullah, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

Schedules

A Note about Schedules: The names you see below are those listed on their respective schedules. There are often times when, due to sickness or travel, substitutes are asked to fill in or trade positions. This will probably NOT be reflected in the lists below—so, if there is an inconsistency between what you see here and what you see on Sunday, that is all right.

Birthdays (this past week):	Alexandra Burkhardt, Barbara Slegel, Thomas Gabel and Christina Wardell
Birthdays (this coming week):	Jackie Schroeder, Lynne Sanford Bielemeier Koch, Stephen Weaver, Wilma Tully and Mary Grosskopf
Acolytes:	June 4: Team 3 June 11: Team 1
Altar Guild:	June 4: Team III June 11: Team III
8 a.m. Readers:	June 4: Lucille Ogden and Lynne Koch June 11: Debbie Belding and Grant Ferris
10 a.m. Readers:	June 4: Wilma Tully/Nancy Montero June 11: Russell Urban-Mead/Andy Hall
Ushers:	June 4: Nancy Montero, Anna Marie Pitcher June 11: Andrew and Tonya Hall
Pledge Clerks:	June 4: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass June 11: Joanne Lown and Janet Bright
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	June 4: Daniel, Alyssa, Aldonna and Andrew Raugalis, John Robinson and Patricia Rooney June 11: David, Manuela, Isabel and Grace Roosevelt, Hank and Jackie Schroeder and Rick, Suzanne, Christian and Brooke Schroeder
Coffee Hour Hosts:	June 4: Audrey Horne, Eric Zavadil June 11: Jodi Triola, Ross and Connie Eames

This Week's Lectionary

Numbers 11:24-30
Psalm 104:25-35, 37
Acts 2:1-21
John 20:19-23

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 225 "Hail The Festival Day"

Sequence: 228 "Holy Spirit, Font of Light"

Offertory: "Come, Thou Holy Spirit"

Communion: 229 "Spirit of Mercy, Truth and Love"

Recessional: 224 "Hail This Joyful Day's Return."

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on Seventh Sunday of Easter (May 28, 2017)

"Whatchoo Lookin' At"

If you've known me for any length of time, you probably know I love to read - and actually, what I love most is children's literature. Always have. When I was a kid, I was even a member of the International Wizard of Oz Club. Not kidding. Did you know there were more than 40 Oz books? Even as an adult, I love kids' books - that was one great thing about becoming a parent - I had the perfect excuse to read all these books over and over. I mean, when Harry Potter came out, and I got to read them out loud... how cool was that?

Anyway, if you've read as many of these books as I have, you notice a common theme in a lot of them. Orphans.

Just look at them:

Cinderella - orphan; Tom Sawyer - orphan; Oliver Twist - orphan; Little Orphan Annie.... Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz - orphan, Superman (well, most superheroes, really - all orphans). One of my favorite childhood stories was The Boxcar Children, where four siblings were all orphans. And the theme lives today. Luke Skywalker (& just about all the main Star Wars heroes - orphans). And of course, Harry Potter... I could go on.

Now why, you may ask yourself, are orphans so common? There are a couple of reasons. For one, in literature, the protagonist has to have it hard - there have to be obstacles to overcome. For a child, one of the biggest hardships or obstacles is the lack of a parent.

Without a parent, they lack a sense of self, of safety, of power. Often, they lack a sense of that parental love. This is true even if the author gives them some sort of a caretaker, because the caretaker is always deficient in some way. They are either cruel, distracted, inept, overwhelmed, or hiding something. Think of Cinderella's wicked step-mother, or Tom Sawyer's overwhelmed Aunt Polly. Or Dorothy's poor and depressed Uncle Henry and Aunt Em. Or Luke Skywalker's Uncle Owen who wouldn't let him know anything about his father. And of course, Harry Potter's spiteful

Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia who made him sleep in a cupboard under the stairs. Even if the caretakers tried hard, they could never be what the children needed.

Another thing these orphan stories have in common is some sort of guide who comes along. Think of the fairy godmother for Cinderella. Or the scarecrow, tin woodman, and cowardly lion (not to mention Glenda the good witch) for Dorothy. Or Obi-Wan Kenobi for Luke Skywalker. And of course, Dumbledore for Harry Potter.

This guide offers wisdom, counsel, comfort, a sense of purpose and courage to do what needs to be done.

So, why do we like these orphan stories so much? The consensus seems to be that we like them because we often feel like orphans even when we're not. We often feel alone, misunderstood, weak, and like we don't quite belong. And we're always looking for that home where we belong.

That's the final commonality in orphan stories. They're looking for home, for where they belong. Cinderella finds her prince, Dorothy finds there's no place like home, Luke Skywalker finds the Jedi, and Harry Potter - eventually - finds Ginny Weasley and a relatively normal life among his fellow wizards.

This is universal - it goes beyond time and space - so that people 2000 years ago halfway across the world experience the same orphan-sense that we may feel today. This is something the apostle Paul understood when he was speaking at the Aropegus. He said to them, "I get your religious needs - how you take it seriously, even to the point of having an unknown god. But you're looking in the wrong place for an answer to that sense of belonging. It doesn't exist in objects made of wood or stone or metal."

The evangelist John also understands this sense of being an orphan.

John is writing his gospel at a different time from the other evangelists. He's writing as they are in the middle of a break-up with the Jewish community in the synagogue. The temple was already destroyed - years if not decades before. Now, even the synagogue is being taken away from them - they're losing the family they grew up with & feel lost, center-less, unrooted.

Which is just how the disciples feel in today's reading. Remember, this passage takes place at the last supper when Jesus is letting the disciples know he won't be with them much longer. Remember last week when he told them he had to leave so he could prepare a place for them in his Father's kingdom? This week's reading takes place at the same time.

In last week's passage Jesus explains why he has to leave. But now, in this passage, he comforts them. He does this with two promises. One, he promises to provide a helper, and advocate. An Obi Wan Kenobe or Albus Dumbledore, if you will.

Only in this case, it is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit who empowers them - and us. Who gives us strength and courage but also a sense of purpose and an ever-present awareness of God's love.

But Jesus doesn't stop there. The Holy Spirit in this world is a guide, a mentor along the way - but NOT the end of the story. For that, Jesus makes a second promise: To return and bring them home to be family.

Like all those good stories, John understands that we're on a journey, and he points to the goal of that journey - the Kingdom of Heaven, our true home.

It's because heaven is our home that we often feel like orphans. We just don't quite fit into this world, don't quite belong. It often feels like we're alone. We need guidance but even more, we need a sense of purpose, belonging, and love.

Those are Jesus' promise to us, just as they were to the disciples.

We will have our Obi Wan - the Holy Spirit

We will have our final home in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus knows us and our needs. In the end, like all good stories, the need is the same. To be loved in our own family. Fortunately, that's exactly what God gives. A happy end. Amen.

NOTE: Audio recordings of some sermons are now available on St. James' website, www.stjameshydepark.org Look under "Worship"